[Chaco Period] Terena

For carrying and storing foodstuffs the Terena used such containers as clay pots, calabashes, baskets, and netted bags. In their houses they also kept such tools and weapons as the digging stick, stone ax, club, spear, and bow and arrows. Materials for weaving baskets and bags were kept in corners, while dried meat, dried fish, skins of animals, and bags of vegetable foods hung from the rafters.

415 412 353

CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS

Both men and women wore a cotton loincloth stretching from the waist to the knees, known as a *shiripá*. A shorter black *shiripá* was worn by men on war parties. During cold weather everyone wore a sleeveless cotton shirt, *repenóti*. In warm weather children went about unclothed. Both men and women used pentagon-shaped leather sandals fastened with a leather thong. All body hair, including eyebrows and pubic hair, was carefully pulled out with pincers. Hair was combed back over the head and fastened with a cord.

291 302

The Terena were fond of wearing necklaces, *nakóti;* bracelets, *imotáki;* and anklets, *imóheve.* These decorations were made by stringing dried seeds, animal teeth, and disks of shell and bone on a cotton cord. In later days, glass beads and bracelets and rings made from silver and even gold were used. During ceremonials the Terena used diadems made from red feathers and short skirts made from rhea feathers. Yellow parrot feathers could be used only by chiefs and usually signified that the wearer had killed an enemy. War chiefs wore, in addition, a robe made from jaguar skins.

301 292 [293] [237]

Discussing the dress and painted designs of the Terena, Castelnau says:

291 302

> These Indians have no other clothes than a piece of cloth which they wrap around their kidneys, their hair is suspended at the back of the head and tied up to form a tail. Both sexes have the habit of covering their bodies with singular paintings, resembling those of the Guaycurú. Their designs are often excessively delicate and represent a harmony and delicacy which by no means can be described. [Ibid., vol. 2, p. 471.]

In connection with ornaments and body paintings, Castelnau adds the following:

302 [301]

> Here are glass beads which are fastened onto cotton cloths with wide stripes. There are scarlet feathers which are tied together and cut to make head ornaments; over there is a woman who is covering her husband's body with

[Bananal village]

Such articles as axes, machetes, sickles, hoes, and weaving frames and material for weaving baskets and hammocks are usually found in the corner of the back room. Mats made from "piri" are found in some of the houses (such as were used in the Chaco days).

CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS

At this point it is necessary to mention only the common everyday wearing apparel and the personal appearance of the Terena, as ceremonial dress will be described in the section on dances. In the village of Bananal all Indians wear European dress. The cotton cloth woven by the Terena forms only a small part of the material used for making their present-day clothing, as the Indians now buy the cheap cotton material offered for sale in the stores of Taunay, Miranda, and Aquidauana. After 30 years of mission training, it appears that all women can sew and eight sewing machines were observed in the village.

The general custom is for everyone to go barefoot. Only during "festas" are shoes worn by the more wealthy men and women, and even then people over 60 years old wear sandals made from hides or from old rubber tires. Shoes, like hats, are definitely in the category of luxuries.

For everyday wear, men use a shirt and a pair of trousers made from light-colored cotton material, usually with a faint stripe or check. No undershirt is used, but shorts are worn. Sport shirts worn over the shirt and outside the trousers are popular with young men. Some of the Terena men go about dressed in old Brazilian army uniforms which they received while serving in the army or which they have bought from others. During dances some of the young men wear suits made from cheap, tan-colored, cotton material. The young men also take great pride in being able to wear the baggy breeches and broadbrimmed felt hat of the "gaucho," or Brazilian cowboy.

Men have their hair cut in the modern style, and it is a common sight on Sunday mornings to see them cutting each other's hair in front of the houses. Although they wash their hair often, it is seldom combed. Men are usually clean-shaven, although a few wear mustaches; straggly beards are seen only on the very old men.

Women wear slips and dresses made from cheap cotton print of various colors. They do not wear coats, although hand-knitted sweaters are seen.

616
796
302

the *sukirikionó* would paint half their bodies white and the other half black.

SOCIAL CLASSES

In addition to the dual division, the Terena were separated into four social classes: (1) Chiefs (*unati*), (2) warriors (*shuna'asheti*), (3) commoners (*wahereshane*), and (4) slaves (*kauti*). The chiefly class comprised the moiety chiefs and their relatives. The *unati* were the highest class in rank and were supposed to marry within their own group. As one could marry only within his own moiety this often meant village exogamy to members of this class. On coming of age the sons of the *unati* went through an elaborate puberty ceremony (*tima*) which amounted to initiation into the chiefly class. In historic times the principal part of the ceremony consisted in the boy approaching his father dressed in a light-red blanket which he would take off and substitute for the dark-red blanket worn by his father. Only the sons of the *unati* went through this ceremony. The daughters of the chiefs also went through a puberty ceremony (*iyoti*) much more elaborate than the puberty ceremony of the daughters of common people.

565
[582]
281
565
622
[292]
[562]
[554]

All the living war chiefs and their children and relatives made up the warrior class. Here, again, marriage within the group was demanded. Commoners were free tribesmen who had not acquired status through war or marriage into the two upper classes. Slaves were young women and children captured in raids, or the children of war captives. Slaves performed services for their masters, followed them in war and danced with them during ceremonials. If a slave distinguished himself in war by killing an enemy he could become a free man. It is said that a slave could even become a war chief if he were particularly successful in war. On the other hand, a slave could be sold or killed by his master.

565
[641]
567
565

In war, moiety differences were disregarded and the village acted as a unit. Every large village had a war chief (*shuna'asheti*) who held office both in war and peace and was the head of the warrior class. As an individual he had the highest rank in the village and drank first at all ceremonies. He, too, carried a cow's horn trumpet as a symbol of rank. In addition, he wore a jaguar skin shirt and a head band of parrot feathers.

616
701
726
554
[534]
[292]
[237]

[p. 28-B]

to the child, the name usually being that of a relative long dead. A mother suckled a child until a new baby was born or until the child was able to eat solid food. A child was carried strapped on the mother's back by a belt called *apóone* or held by the same strap in front while suckling. For short distances small children were carried straddling the hip of the bearer. Childbirth appears to have been treated purely as a secular event, for the Terena remember no special ceremonies or rites connected with it.

Today, childbirth is treated in the Brazilian fashion. In cases of difficult birth the missionaries are present to give medical help. They also give advice in the care of children. The infant is baptized into either the Catholic or Protestant faith. In addition to receiving a Brazilian name, the child also receives a Terena name. It is whispered that abortion and even infanticide are still occasionally practiced.

PUBERTY

Although the puberty ceremony for boys and girls is no longer practiced, the Terena say that in the past each family celebrated the coming of age of its children, only the chiefly class giving a public ceremony. When a chief's daughter reached the age of puberty, *iyoti*, her kinswomen fastened a small bell, *tohí*, over the doorway of her house, which was periodically struck by one of the women. The girl painted her body black with "genipapo" or red with "urucú" and sat cross-legged on a reed mat in the center of the house. The women of the village then brought cotton and beans which they threw over the head of the girl. The kinswomen of the girl gave the visitors food and drink. There was no long period of seclusion, as this ceremony lasted for 1 day only.

Even today, menstruating women paint themselves black and abstain from washing as in the past. Contact with water is believed to cause the enmity of a certain water witch that lives in a lake or river and controls the supply of fish.

In the past, the sons of the chiefs went through a public ceremony at puberty called *tima*. The principal part of the ceremony consisted in the boy approaching his father dressed in a light-red blanket which he took off, then donning a dark-red blanket handed him by his father. The dark-red blanket was a symbol not only of adulthood but

2:Oberg E-5 (1946-1947)1949 SK7 Guana SK7
Terena
[Chaco Period]

881
also of membership in the *unati*, or chiefly class. 622
This ceremony took place in the house of the boy's 565
father and in the presence of all the members of
the village. Feasting and dancing accompanied [292]
the ceremony. As in the case of girls, seclusion
did not form a part of the puberty ceremony.

MARRIAGE (KOYENÓTI)

In the old days parents arranged marriages be- 584
tween their children while the children were still
young. The parents of the boy would take presents
to the parents of the girl. If the girl's parents
accepted, they would take their girl to the house
of the boy's parents and leave her there for a day
or two. When the girl returned she was consid-
ered betrothed to the boy, the actual marriage tak-
ing place when the girl had reached puberty.

The betrothal ceremony, known as *koyenóne*, [567]
was rather an elaborate performance. On going
to visit the girl's parents the boy's father and
mother were preceded by a slave, *káuti*, who led
a cow or carried a calf on his back. The slave
was a messenger and was known as the *yuhokóti*.
Upon arriving at the girl's house the boy's parents
were greeted and asked to enter and sit down. The
yuhokóti remained standing until he made his
speech. He addressed the girl's parents saying,
"*Háranziminó viarunoechá*" (I have come to ar-
range about your girl). The girl's father, if he
agreed, then replied, "*Unati enomivé kopó*" (All
right, I shall receive you). The messenger then
sat down and the parents discussed the marriage
of their children. When arrangements had been
completed the boy's parents left their gifts and
departed.

When the girl reached puberty the wedding 585
ceremony, *koyenóti*, took place. The bride's par- 574
ents invited relatives and friends and built a spe-
cial shed from "acuri" palm fronds under which
the dances were performed. Much food and drink
were prepared for the guests. When the guests
had arrived, the bride's parents fetched the groom
and his parents. When the groom arrived he said,
"*Ziminóti oveá neyé*" (I have come to stay). To
this the bride's father answered, "*Unati, kóyo
eshági shopiné*" (Thank you, you are now my
son).

The bride's father then led the groom to a ham- 585
mock on which the bride was already seated. The
groom sat down beside her, their feet resting on

[P. 39-B]

a specially adorned reed mat called *pouhi hevé koyenóti* (footrest for marriage). After getting up from the hammock the boy and girl were considered a married couple. Feasting and dancing then took place in accompaniment to the singing and the playing of drums and flutes. This is a description of the marriage ceremony as practiced by the *xnati*, or moiety chiefs, and their relatives. 585

In the case of a marriage involving the son of a war chief the procedure was a bit different. The war chief and his wife, preceded by three warriors in full regalia consisting of rhea feather headdresses and skirts and armed with bows and arrows, went to the house of the girl's father. Arriving at the home of the future bride the warriors knelt before the girl's father and made a request for his daughter in the name of the boy's father. If the girl's father agreed the visitors were requested to sit down, the two fathers sitting on the same reed mat. In this position they discussed the wedding date and determined the time when they would go out to gather honey for making the beverage, *mopó*. 584 565 [292] [273]

When the *mopó* was ready the ceremony took place. The groom and his parents were led by three warriors to the house of the bride's parents. Upon entering the house the three warriors said, "We have brought your son." The bride's father then thanked the warriors and led the groom to a hammock on which the bride was sitting. After sitting together the pair were considered married. The Terena say that in an older form of marriage the bride and groom sat on the reed mat, *hituri*, and held hands. The three warriors were given *mopó* to drink until they were not able to get up. Guests took part in dances and singing and partook of the food and *mopó* that had been prepared in large quantities beforehand. 585 565

Today the young man makes his request directly to the girl's father, and if the father agrees the young couple are married as far as Terena custom is concerned. According to informants, the majority of marriages are made in this manner. If a young man and woman wish to marry according to Brazilian law, they must register and then be married in either a Catholic or Protestant church. As the registration fee is 200 cruzeiros the young people may have to be engaged for some time until the groom accumulates the money. 197 585 [278]

[Chaco Period]
[Post Chaco Period]

of meat from his mouth, blow on it until it took the form of a snake, later making it disappear into his mouth; or he would take a small plant from his mouth and by blowing on it make it grow into a large flowering plant, later making it diminish and disappear.

This performance of miracles would continue before the house of each shaman. When this part of the *ohéo'koti* was completed the shamans withdrew to appear again dressed in red mantles called *haráramototi*. Again they marched before each house stopping at the houses of the shamans where each shaman would give his colleagues the mead which he had prepared. After all the mead had been consumed the shamans retired and the *ohéo'koti* was finished for the season.

Among the Terena, shamans had, in the past, a position of extraordinary prestige. This high status was due, no doubt, in part to their alleged power to cure, to discover lost objects, to assist in hunting, and to discover the location of enemy war parties, and, in part, to their alleged power to perform miracles. Besides participating intimately in the fundamental activities of social life, the shamans were the repositories and the transmitters of tribal lore and of origin myths and were the connecting link between the Terena and the supernatural world in which everyone believed. Above all, they were instrumental in bringing the people together at the time of the annual *ohéo'koti* during which both the living and the ghosts of the dead participated in observing the power of the shamans to control the world.

PRESENT-DAY RELIGION

Although the Terena have been in contact with a Christian community for over a century and Protestant missionaries have been active in Bananal for about 35 years, shamanism is by no means dead. At Bananal there are, today, six shamans—four men and two women. The four men (Eperú, José, Sabino, and Brigido) were consulted. Eperú for instance, explained that he learned his shamanism from his father who was also a shaman. He said that although he does not have the power to perform miracles, such as making a "bicho" (a little animal) come out of his mouth, he has spirits with whom he can get into contact. These spirits are the ghosts of dead shamans. He calls the spirits at night when he wants them to help him.

[P.45-A]

[Chaco Period]
[Post Chaco Period]

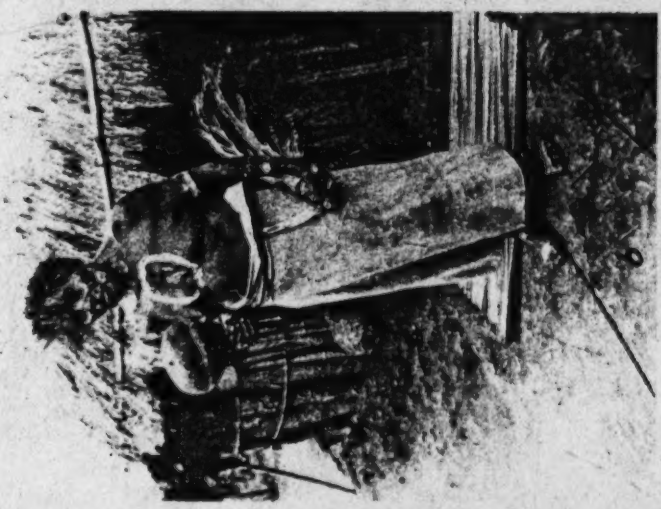
European origin of this ceremony is obvious. The "caboclos" of the States of Minas Gerais and São Paulo have a pageant which is Portuguese in origin and which represents a peace ceremony between the Portuguese Christians and the Moors, in which kings, princesses, soldiers, and ambassadors are present. Although the Terena no longer remember the origin of the *láia*, certain similarities enable us to say with some assurance that the Terena have incorporated many of the elements of the "congada" into the *láia*.

The really important dance of the Terena at present is the *kóhi-shoti-kipahá*, or "bate-pau." Although this dance can be performed at any time, a special performance is put on during "Indian Day," April 19. The dancers are divided into two groups, one being called "mansa" (tame) and the other, "brava" (wild). The members of each side paint their faces and bodies in a special way. The dancers of one side paint the right arm and shoulder red and the left arm and shoulder white, while the dancers of the other side paint one side white and the other black. Thus, although the moiety organization of the Terena has broken down, the "bate-pau" resembles a moiety dance. The names of the two sides (tame and wild) are Portuguese versions of the names of the moieties. The principal differences between the dance organization and the old moiety organization are that individuals can choose the side on which they wish to dance and that the two groups are headed by dance leaders irrespective of their old moiety membership. In addition to body painting, the dancers wear short skirts made from rhea feathers, a rhea feather diadem, and bangles below the knee.

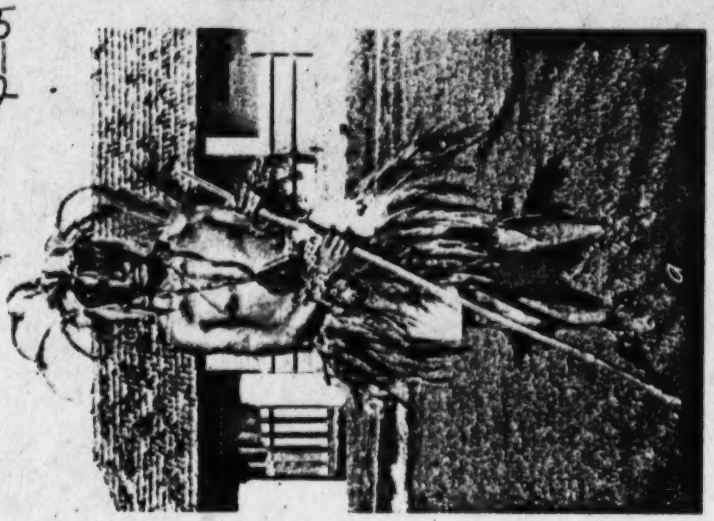
The music for the dance is provided by two drummers and one or two flute players who stand in front of the dancers while they are performing circles, or march in front of the dancers when they move from one place to another in two parallel lines, each line being led by its dance leader. Each dancer holds a bamboo cane about 4 or 5 feet long in his right hand and has a short bow strapped to his back. A hole is made in the center of the bow in which a small arrow is placed, one end being fastened to the bow string. The bow is used in one of the sequences to make a rhythmic sound.

The "bate-pau" has to be seen and heard to be appreciated. For a month the dancers practice

756
192
302
534
293



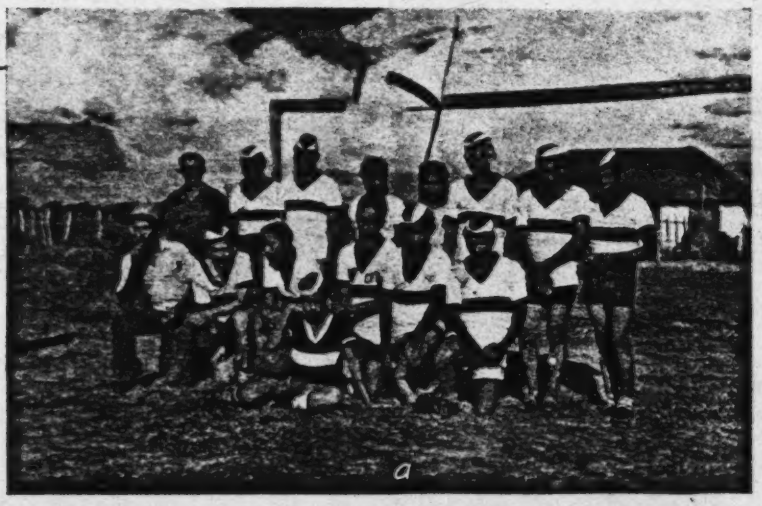
535
301
292



[End Plate 8]

[P. 80]

526
292



541

PLATE 11.—Terena sports. a, Football game. b, A crowd gathered for a home run.

[p. 83]

[End Plate 11]

3:Oliveira--103 E-5,4 (1955-1958) 1960 SK7 Guana SK7
Layâna

/72a/
142
292
301
302
756

Gonçalo, a Layâna survivor and the most highly regarded Koixomuneti in Cachoeirinha. (1955)

3:Oliveira--103c E-54 (1955-1958) 1960 SK7 Guana SK7
Layâna

172b/
292
301
534
756

Gonçalo at "work." (1955)

3:Oliveira--196a E-5,4(1955-1958) 1960 SK7 Guana SK7
Terena

/136a/

142
292
301
302
756
*177

Young Terêna, Koixomuneti apprentice, wearing around his neck an image of the "Sacred Heart." (Cachoeirinha, 1955)

/405 cont./

592 Since most men have two wives and as a rule have children by
[595] each one, the bedsteads have to be made very large. Most are
[352] so large that six adult persons can sleep on them. If the fertility in a family hut is so great that the latter becomes too small, the youngest families build themselves small huts nearby or
353 establish a new family-house. The interior arrangement is the same in all the huts. The beds are set up in one or two rows.
[415] Near the bed each family has its property in large nets or bags, either hung on a hut post or on a yntocoqui. In addition, one sees many earthenware dishes and calabashes here, in all sizes and shapes, which contain all sorts of things and in part stand on
[411] the floor, in part are hung up. Some weaving frames, bows, arrows, lances, and guns complete the equipment.

622 Each village has a commander (subchief), and the whole
643 nation is ruled by a cacique, who has a commission as capitão
648 /captain, chief/ from the Brazilian government. This ruler of
643 all the Terenos received me in a very friendly manner, showed
123 me above all /406/ his commission and then a photograph of Emperor Pedro II, whom he called his amigo. His costume looked
● [292] very interesting. He had wound a chiripá around his bare legs, while the upper part of his body was stuffed into a worn-out military coat without any buttons. After I had sacrificed a few bottles of caña /rum/, he presented me with a fan for flies, and we took most cordial leave from each other.

291 The chief article of clothing of the Terenos is the chiripá, a rectangular piece of cloth which is wound around the loins. Both sexes wore this chiripá. Many men were clothed in shirts or trousers. I often saw young girls with bright-colored cotton
[439] jackets on their bare bodies. They buy or barter for the last-
302 mentioned articles of clothing in Miranda. Young girls and women paint their faces with black paint, whereas the men decorate
312 their bodies with it only for festivals. Since the Rio de Miranda
439 has salt water, the Indian women provide fresh spring water for the place. Daily in Miranda, early in the morning, one sees